

What is a Planned Unit Development?

A Planned Unit Development (PUD) is a jurisdiction-approved site design and grouping of structures for commercial and/or residential uses.

How does a PUD differ from traditional development?

Traditional development must conform to the general requirements of the Land Use Code (LUC) for minimum lot size, building setback, height, and lot coverage. The PUD process, requirements, and decision criteria allow for all of the general LUC requirements to be modified in order to foster site design that helps protect natural land features, conserve energy, and provide common open space.

What Benefits does a PUD provide to its occupants and the general population?

The dimensional flexibility inherent in the PUD process fosters compact development, the creation of common open space, and the preservation and protection of natural systems and wildlife habitat.

The PUD process provides viable options for achieving the permitted density, even for sites with environmental constraints. This is particularly valuable for close-in sites because it provides the opportunity for more people to live near commercial/employment centers, which expands commuting options and reduces the time and expense of commuting. Lastly, it protects more of the natural environment within the urban growth area, and reduces pressure on the urban growth boundary.

Does the city allow a PUD site or the structures within it to be modified?

Yes, with one qualification. Site and building exterior design criteria are fundamental to the city's decision of approval for the PUD. Therefore, at a minimum all proposed changes to the site or building exteriors require approval of a Land Use Exemption (LUX). And if the proposed changes are extensive, it might require approval of an amendment to the plat or the PUD.

If you live in a PUD and contemplate making changes to the site or building, please call the planner on duty in Development Services, 425-452-4188, or send an e-mail to landusereview@ci.bellevue.wa.us for more information on how to proceed.

When does a PUD make more sense than traditional development?

A PUD is the obvious solution when a proposal site has critical areas or when the future residents might prefer larger common areas over small, private yards.

Do the PUD requirements allow the density permitted under the site's zoning?

Yes. In fact, the PUD requirements allow for a density increase up to 10 percent above that allowed by the site's zoning. However, PUD sites often have environmental challenges which reduce the potential for achieving the permitted density as well as the density bonus.

Do the requirements for a PUD address aesthetic issues related to concentrated density?

Yes. All PUDs have Retained Vegetation Areas (RVA) and Native Growth Protection Areas (NNGPA). These areas are typically located along the site perimeter and adjacent to all critical areas. The areas of vegetation help protect natural systems and visually soften the development from the surrounding residents.

My lot includes an NGPA/RVA. Do I need the city's approval to remove or install plant material in these areas?

Yes. City approval is required for any work within RVAs or NGPAs, regardless of whether the lot is owned by one person or in common. The codes and policies support no disturbance of NGPAs and RVAs for the life of the project. However, work within these areas may be needed from time to time for life safety or aesthetic reasons. Such work may include the removal of dead or dying trees or non-native plants and enhancement planting.

A restoration plan consisting of indigenous plants is required for city approval of any work within an NGPA or RVA. Further, approval to work in an NGPA may require State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review, depending on the scope of the proposed change and the sensitivity of the site. At a minimum, city approval for work in an NGPA or RVA requires a land use exemption application and/or a clearing & grading permit.

If you live in a PUD and contemplate making changes to an NGPA/RVA, please call the planner on duty in Development Services, 425-452-4188, or e-mail to landusereview@ci.bellevue.wa.us for more information on how to proceed.

Are there special requirements or permits required to construct a fence or deck on a private lot within a PUD?

At a minimum, city approval for a fence or deck within a PUD requires approval of a land use exemption. However, if the proposed fence exceeds 8 feet in height or the proposed deck exceeds 30 inches in height (from finished grade), a building permit is required too.

Further, every fence has at least one "face," and fences with a single face must face the neighboring properties. Lastly, if your lot has an NGPA/RVA, a fence may not be located such that it would visually "chop up" the RVA or block visual access to the NGPA/RVA from another property within the PUD.

Where can I get additional information?

- LUC 20.30D, Planned Unit Development
- LUC 20.25H, Critical Areas Overlay District

This document is intended to provide guidance in applying certain Land Use Code regulations and is for informational use only. It cannot be used as a substitute for the Land Use Code or for other city codes, such as the Construction Codes. Additional information is available from Development Services at Bellevue City Hall or on the city website at www.bellevuewa.gov.

For land use regulations that may apply to your project, contact the Land Use Information Desk in Development Services. Phone: 425-452-4188. E-mail: landusereview@ci.bellevue.wa.us. Assistance for the hearing impaired: dial 711.
